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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to develop a third-year elementary French curriculum which integrated the oral-aural-visual and individualized approaches to language learning. The curriculum was based on a language arts approach which incorporated listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. It was designed for use: (1) with students of average to above average intelligence; (2) during twenty, thirty, and forty minute class periods; and (3) with materials readily available to the classroom teacher. The curriculum was implemented in two Cleveland, Ohio, public schools with fifth and sixth grade students who has had two or more years of elementary French instruction. All students participating in the FLES curriculum met the prescribed objectives and criteria for evaluation. After one semester of instruction, classroom observations indicated behavioral differences between students participating in the FLES curriculum and those who had followed the existing curriculum. (Author)

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A FLES CURRICULUM FOR THIRD YEAR FRENCH: A LANGUAGE ARTS APPROACH

Rosanne Blass and Barbara Weber

Growing interest in ethnic studies, a growing demand for bilingual education, as well as increasing international interdependence and United States obligations under the Helsinki accord of 1975 are current factors resulting in a renewed interest in the study of foreign languages. In August 1977, President Carter authorized the establishment of a commission on foreign language study. The purposes of the commission are two-fold: to demonstrate a need for foreign languages and to recommend ways of fostering foreign language study in the elementary and secondary schools as well as in higher education.[1]

Current trends in language instruction appear to fall into two categories: the oral-aural-visual approach[2], and the individualized approach.[3] The oral-aural-visual approach operates on the premise that talking is a prelude to writing. Language activities are communication centered, providing for individual aid and small group interaction,

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[1]Malcolm G. Scully, "New Support for Language Study," The Chronicle of Higher Education, November 7, 1977, 9.

[2]Jack Gilson, "Listening and Response Theory: Implications for Linguistically Different Learners," Elementary English, December, 1970, 1060-6.

[3]Arthur J. Gionet, "Current Foreign Language Methods," French Review, October, 1974, 17-24.

When implemented at McNeill Elementary School, success was achieved in that: 1) students enjoyed the freedom of the self-directed small group activities; 2) pronunciation and intonation improved through the use of tape recorders; 3) sequential worksheets increased sutdents' structural knowledge of the language. The variety of assignments alleviated much of the boredom associated with the language class and students learned to pace themselves working the different units on an individual basis.[4]

The individualized approach to foreign language learning has become increasingly popular and has been used at all levels from primary to university level courses. Individualization can be approached from three perspectives.

> One can individualize the goals of instruction, the means of attaining those goals and/or the speed of attaining those goals. An individualized program may involve any or all three of these aspects.[5]

A two-year pilot study done at McCluer High School in Illinois, 1967-68, stressed individualization, the use of multi-media equipment such as tape recorders, cassettes and film projectors, and varied small group activities.[6] Results of the program measured by the standardized

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[4]Ted D. Devries, "Writing Writing and Talking Writing," Elementary English, December, 1970, 1067-71.

[5]Howard B. Altman, Individualizing the Foreign Language Classroom: Perspectives for Teachers, (Rawley, Mass., 1972), pp.6-10.

[6]Fred Hood, "A Non-Graded Multidirectional Approach to the Study of Foreign Languages," Clearinghouse, January, 1970, 279-281.

Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery and a questionnaire compiled and completed by the students indicated:

1. Students became more self-directed in their learning.
2. Students were actively involved in learning.
3. Students made considerable progress in receptive skills: reading and listening.
4. Significant achievement was realized in expressive skills: speaking and writing.
5. Increased enrollment in the foreign language courses demonstrated that students were interested in studying a language other than English.

The purpose of this study was to develop a third year elementary French curriculum which integrated the oral-aural-visual and individualized approaches. The curriculum was based on a language arts approach which incorporated listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. It was designed for use: 1) with students of average to above average intelligence; 2) during twenty, thirty, and forty minute class periods; 3) with materials readily available to the classroom teacher. The curriculum was implemented in two Cleveland, Ohio public schools with fifth and sixth grade students who had had two or more years of elementary French instruction.

The need for this study arose out of the authors' classroom teaching experiences and observations. Use of the existing curriculum guide indicated that it was inadequate in a number of ways. The curriculum guide called for 95% oral drill. The exercises taught were lacking both in sequence and phonetic pattern. Little or no reading and writing

experiences were provided. Neither structural language skills nor basic French grammar were developed. Finally, the instructional materials and methods used seemed to be too immature to be effective with eleven and twelve-year old students.

Observations indicated that after two years of French language instruction French language and culture held little interest for the majority of the students. They had little or no knowledge of basic language structure, had not developed a sight word vocabulary, nor could they "sound out" the pronunciation of written words. Pronunciation skills were adequate but students had no notion of proper French intonation. They could neither read aloud nor write simple sentences. Furthermore, they could not conduct a simple conversation.

OBJECTIVES

I. Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of French language structure.

   A. Students will orally conjugate and identify in written form the present tense of any regular er, ir, or re verb. Example: parler (to speak); finir (to finish); vendre (to sell).

   B. Students will orally conjugate and identify in written form the present tense of eight irregular verbs: avoir (to have); être (to be); aller (to go); prendre (to take); faire (to make or do); mettre (to put); pouvoir (to be able); and venir (to come).

   C. Students will identify masculine and feminine noun gender. Example: la fille (feminine); le garcon (masculine).

D. Students will use correctly in sentences the French prepositions: dans (in); au-dessus (above); au-dessous (below); à (to); de (of or from); devant (in front of); derrière (behind); sur (on); sous (under); avant (before); après (after).

E. Students will demonstrate correct grammatical agreement between a noun and an adjective. Example: la robe bleue (feminine); le ciel bleu (masculine).

F. Students will use correctly in French sentences the conjunctions: et (and); puis (then); and donc (therefore or that).

G. Students will write simple questions and respond correctly to simple questions using affirmative and negative language patterns.

H. Students will successfully complete simple translation exercises.

II. Students will demonstrate acquisition of a basic sight word vocabulary.

A. Students will identify sight words in context.

B. Students will effectively use a French/English dictionary.

III. Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of French culture.

A. Students will identify and list differences between French and American lifestyle, homelife, occupation, transportation, cuisine, and leisure pastimes.

B. Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of French geography by identifying the topography, regions, major cities, and surrounding countries of France.

IV. Students will demonstrate basic mastery of pronunciation and intonation techniques.

A. Students will correctly discriminate and enunciate the sound of

each letter of the alphabet.

B. Students will sound out simple words using basic phonetic skills.

C. Students will read orally and/or recite simple passages and conversational dialogue using correct intonation and pronunciation.

D. Students will orally ask and answer oral questions using the correct affirmative and negative language structural patterns.

E. Students will conduct a short conversation with a member of the class given a specific topic as a focal point. Example: school.

PROCEDURES

The curriculum was divided into twelve units. Eight core units focused on a specific passage or dialogue (Bouygues, 1972). Four supplementary units focused on different segments of French culture. Each unit took three weeks to complete. The twelve units covered thirty-six of the thirty-eight weeks in the school year.

The eight core units were numbered and presented sequentially as to length and difficulty. Unit One was the simplest with Unit Eight being the longest and most difficult.

Unit 1: À la station-service (At the gas station)

Unit 2: La visite du medecin (The doctor's visit)

Unit 3: Un renseignment (A piece of information)

Unit 4: L'embouteillage (Traffic jam)

Unit 5: Aux sports d'hiver (Winter sports)

Unit 6: À l'épicerie (At the grocery store)

Unit 7: Une chambre d'étudiant (A student's room)

Unit 8: Une soirée en famille (An evening at home)

The four supplementary units were developed according to the interests of the class. Students decided what they would like to study by means of a discussion or questionnaire. Four topics of interest to fifth and sixth grade students were: La cuisine française (French food); Le tourisme (Travel); Les sports et la musique: les divertissements (Sports and music: pastimes); La géographie de la France (Geography of France). Information was gathered by the students themselves.

Each unit included fifteen tasks to be completed within the three week period: three oral tasks; three grammar tasks; three comprehension tasks; three vocabulary tasks; three cultural centered tasks. Tasks for Unit 6: À l'épicerie (At the grocery store) are included in the Appendix. Each student was expected to complete five tasks per week, one in each of the five categories. Each week a new set of tasks was added. These tasks remained posted throughout the entire three week unit.

The classroom was divided into four areas: an area for individualized instruction, an area for posting seatwork, and two learning stations. Two chairs were located at the front of the room for individualized instruction. A folder box and progress chart were posted nearby. Student progress was marked on the progress chart as work was completed.

Seatwork was posted on the wall between the two learning stations. All materials needed to complete each of the fifteen tasks were numbered and kept on desks placed in front of each task posted. Materials used for posting and completing seatwork tasks were those readily available to all teachers: manilla folders, ditto paper, newstrip, construction

paper, and masking tape.

There were two learning stations: a language laboratory labelled écouter and a seatwork station labelled écrire. The language laboratory was a listening station consisting of a listening bar with twelve sets of headphones and a tape recorder with cassette. The seatwork station consisted of desks, chairs, and dictionairies.

At the listening station each student had his/her own set of earphones plugged into the listening bar and a written copy of the taped vocabulary words and passage. Each student listened to taped vocabulary words and passage three times during a class period. The tape allowed for repetition of each vocabulary word and passage line by the student. Each week the tape was changed to progressively increase the speed of the passage. By the end of the third week students were expected to listen, read, and recite using conversational speed and intonation.

At the seatwork station each student was expected to complete four written tasks and one oral task each week. (See Appendix). The tasks were not sequential and could be completed in random rather than numerical order. Each task required no more than one class period to complete.

Each task was designed with a specific language skill as the focal point of the exercise. Dictionary tasks required use of the French/English dictionary. Verb exercises used cloze procedure which required the student to supply the correct form of the verb as well as its English translation. Unscrambling sentences from the unit passage provided a structural exercise.

Cultural tasks focused on application of acquired skills and development of higher level thinking skills. For example, dialogue between a grocer and shopper was presented. Students were asked to write two shopping lists, one for an American supermarket, the other for a French grocery store. They were expected to compare the lists noting the similarities and differences found in the two.

Oral tasks required oral reading of the basic vocabulary, a passage sentence, or performing a dialogue with a partner, Oral reading or recitation of the passage constituted the final task. Optional tasks such as performing a dialogue with puppets or classmates using basic vocabulary were provided.

The teacher was available to answer questions or provide assistance on an individual basis. As each task was completed, the teacher checked the work and recorded it on her record sheet and progress chart. Each student had the opportunity to correct mistakes and to raise his/her grade. If a student completed all of the assigned tasks, extra credit tasks such as: 1) design a game for classroom use; 2) prepare a French recipe to share; 3) teach a folk dance were provided.

The class was divided into two equal groups. Groups alternated between the listening and seatwork stations. All tasks that were started and/or completed were filed in individual student folders marked with the student's name and group number. Completed work was checked by the teacher, on an individual basis, then recorded on the teacher's record sheet as well as on the posted progress chart. Individual folders were kept in a larger group folder and did not

leave the classroom. Tape captains distributed and collected the individual folders to and from his/her group at the beginning and end of each class period. A total of four tape captains, two regular and two alternates, were responsible for the folders.

EVALUATION

Students were evaluated based on the accuracy of both oral and written tasks. The following criteria were established to measure success of the FLES curriculum.

1. Eighty-five percent of the class will complete fifteen unit tasks within the prescribed three week period.
2. Eighty-five percent of the class will demonstrate improved oral pronunciation and intonation technique measured by their three oral reading tasks.
3. Eighty-five percent of the class will read the passage or dialogue aloud using correct pronunciation and intonation techniques.
4. Eighty-five percent of the class will correctly conjugate a verb, use the verb correctly in a sentence and recognize the present tense forms of the verb in a written passage.
5. Eighty-five percent of the class will recognize unit vocabulary words orally and in written form.
6. Eighty-five percent of the class will respond orally and in writing to simple questions based on the passage studied.
7. Eighty-five percent of the class will recognize certain prepositions and conjunctions used in sentences found in the written

passages.

8. Eighty-five percent of the class will list cultural aspects of contemporary French society different from those found in the United States.

All students participating in the FLES curriculum met the prescribed objectives and criteria for evaluation. After one semester of instruction, classroom observations indicated behavioral differences between students participating in the FLES curriculum and those who had followed the existing curriculum.

FLES students were eager, enthusiastic, and on-task during instructional periods. They demonstrated interest in both French language and culture by independently asking the school librarian as well as their parents for additional information, books, and resources. They demonstrated proper French intonation, could read and write simple sentences, and conduct a simple conversation.

The FLES curriculum will continue to be used with two classes of fifth and sixth grade students in the Cleveland Ohio public schools for a period of one year. During that year the curriculum will be refined and more fully developed.

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APPENDIX

Travail 1. À l'épicerie

(Vocabulary)

Copy carefully the twelve vocabulary words and their meanings from the board. Put this list into your folder.

Learn the meanings of the twelve French words. Come to be tested when ready.

Learn the correct pronunciation of the French words. Come to be tested when ready.

Travail 2. À l'épicerie

(Vocabulary)

Look up the English definitions of the French words listed below.

1. réclame

2. fromage

3. râpé

4. appétit

5. désirer

6. terminer

7. bouteilles

8. aucune

9. cher

10. importance

Travail 3. À l'épicerie

(Grammar)

Carefully unscramble the ten sentences from the story.

1. appétit, revoir Au Madame bon

2. vous Ca quinze vingt-cinq francs fait

3. grammes râpé de là! Oh là terminer cinquante fromage pour Et Tout augments!

4. rouge bouteilles Deux de ordinaire.

5. de m'en Il quatre même. faut tout

6. aurons monde aujourd hui. Nous du

7. artichouts? des Et vous avez

8. chers saison, en cette sont Mais ils

9. aussi porc en du de pâté réclame en J'ai

10. desirez? vous Madame, Bonjour,

Travail 4. À l'épicerie

(Grammar)

Put the correct form of the verb etre or avoir in the blank. Use pencil.

1. Vous _____ du pâté de fois gras bien frais.
2. J' _____ aussi du pate de porc en reclame.
3. L'épicier _____ des artichauts et des bananes en reclame.
4. Ils _____ chers en cette saison.
5. Elle n' _____ pas de monnaie.
6. Madame _____ une cliente de l'épicerie.
7. Nous _____ a l'épicerie.
8. Nous _____ des pommes, du pâté et le steak en solde aujourd hui.

Travail 5. À l'épicerie

(Oral)

Read three sentences from the passage aloud.

Read the entire vocabulary list aloud from Travail 1.

Travail 6. À l'épicerie

(Comprehension)

Write the English translation of the following sentences.

1. Bonjour, Madame, vous désirez?

2. J'ai aussi du pâté de porc en reclame.

3. Mais ils sont chers en cette saison.

4. Je regrette, je n'ai pas de monnaie.

5. Et avez-vous des artichauts?

6. Et pour terminer cinquante grammes de fromage rapé.

Travail 7. À l'épicerie

(Comprehension)

Write ten sentences using the French vocabulary words below.

Example: J'ai des artichauts

J'ai des artachauts en reclame.

1. Épicier a	du pâté
2. à l'épicerie	nous sommes
3. des bananes	elle désire
4. un bon épicier	il est
5. de la monnaie	j'ai
6. ils n'ont pas	de la monnaie
7. des artichauts	voulez-vous
8. nous avons	du pâté de porc
9. les bananes	sont chers
10. frais	le pâté de fois gras est

Travail 8. À l'épicerie

(Comprehension)

Complete the sentences. Underline the verb in each sentence.

1. _____, j'en ai _____.

2. _____deux cents grammes de fois gras.

3. Nous aurons _____ aujourd hui.

4. Ils _____d'arriver.

5. _____ tout de même.

6. Avec la consigne _____ cinquante francs la bouteilles.

7. _____ importance, Madame.

8. _____cinquante francs vingt-cinq en tout, Madame.

9. _____ après?

10. Bonjour Madame _____désirez?

Travail 9. À l'épicerie

(Cultural)

Choose a French magazine. Leaf through the pages and choose a page of print. Copy all the words on the page that you recongize. Write the English definition opposite each word.

EATON'S
CORRASABLE
BOND
LEAF
BERKSHIRE
25% COTTON FIBRE

Travail 10. À l' épicerie

(Cultural)

Choose a partner. Prepare to read the dialogue aloud together. One person take the part of the grocer; the other take the part of the customer. You may use props!

Travail 11. À l'épicerie

(Oral)

Orally read and answer the following questions in French using either the affirmative or the negative.

1. Épicier, a-t-il des artichauts?

2. La cliente, a-t-elle de la monnaie?

3. Le pâté de fois gras, est-il bien frais?

4. Les artichauts, sont-ils chers en cette saison?

5. Le pâté de porc, est-il en réclame?

EATON'S
(CORRASABLE)
BOND
USA
BERKSHIRE
25% COTTON FIBRE

Travail 12. À l'épicerie

(Grammar)

Conjugate the following French verbs in the present tense. Give the English definitions.

Etre	Avoir
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.

EATON'S
CORRASABLE
BOND
USA
25% COTTON FIBRE

Travail 13. A l'épicerie

(Vocabulary)

Make as many French words as you can out of the following French words.

Do not use the dictionary?

1. désirer

2. au revoir

3. bon appétit

4. cinquante

5. grammes

EATON'S
CORRASABLE
BOND
USA
SAMPSHIRE
20 LB TWENTY FIBRE

Travail 14. À l'épicerie

(Cultural)

Write a shopping list that contains ten items you might buy in an American supermarket. Write a shopping list that contains ten items you might buy in a French grocery store. Compare the two lists. Are there any differences? If so, what are the differences? List them.

Travail 15. À l'épicerie

(Oral)

Read the entire dialogue aloud. Use good expression. Pay attention to word pronunciation.

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USA
SERKSHIRE
25% COTTON FIBRE